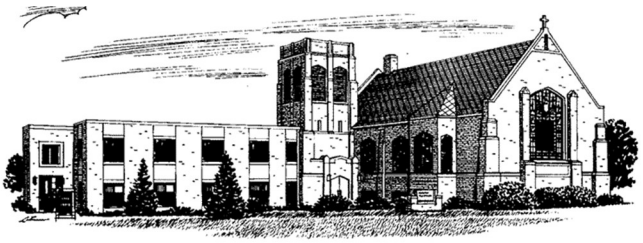
SARON MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085



Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Saron's Mission: ***Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!***

Joe Ulrey, Saron Congregational Council President
Cell: 313-718-2563
Email: josephulrey@yahoo.com

Amanda Bradley, Admin Assistant
Cell: 419-306-5780
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
bradley717@gmail.com

Marcus Roll, Music Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com

Irma Gorman, Organist
Email: pianoladyijg@yahoo.com

Ken Boyd, Bookkeeper
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org

Sara Porter, Childcare Specialist
Email: portersara20@gmail.com

Typical Sunday at Saron:

Fall, Winter and Spring (**began Sept 8**):
8:30am Worship On-Location
9:40am Learning Hour for Ages 3-Adult
11am Worship with Zoom Option
Nursery Available

Summer (begins May 25, 2025):
10am Worship
On-Location and via Zoom
Nursery Available
No Learning Hour

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

REMINDER: Set any manual clocks back one hour before going to bed on Saturday, November 2!

Tuesday November 26 7pm

Will also be available via Zoom

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

With Advent just around the corner, beginning on December 1, we wanted to put out where things stand so far. More details will be sent out as the plan evolves.

WEDNESDAYS, DECEMBER 4, 11 & 18

Advent Soup Suppers at 6:15pm
Worships at 7pm
On-location & via Zoom
Stay after worship for church decorating on Dec 11 and a carol sing on Dec 18.

General Information

OFFICE HOURS

Amanda Bradley (Admin Assistant):
Mondays & Thursdays 9am-noon
Helping Hands Office Volunteers:
Wednesdays 9:00am-11am (approx)
Ken Boyd (Bookkeeper):
Thursday Mornings and by Appointment

If you or your loved one is need of a visit or pastoral care, please contact Ed Staude. He will get you in touch with the correct person. Ed's contact info is 636/288-1016 or staude.edmund@gmail.com.

Other questions or concerns during the pastoral transition can be addressed to the appropriate council member or liaison:
President - Joe Ulrey
Vice President - Fran Bolson
Secretary - Claudia Staude
Treasurer - Ed Brunner
Worship - Erik Bergh (or Krin Jurgensen, Worship Chair)
Learning - Fran Bolson or Claudia Staude
Outreach - Sally Schmuhl or Jim Manore
Facilities - Steve Cook or Ed Brunner
Youth - Chuck Knebl
Support - Jim Manore (or Don Hafer, Support Chair)
Hospitality - Merrily Smith

Caring and Sharing

IN OUR PRAYERS

Tom Taylor is at Caretel in St. Joseph;
John Olson is at Woodland Terrace in Bridgman.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members!

11/1 Suzy Kohs
11/2 Eric Burrow
11/2 Merrily Smith
11/4 Sterling Carter
11/4 Laurel Gacek
11/4 Laura Stark
11/7 Meredith Gacek
11/13 Carter Hohman
11/15 Coanne Hohman
11/17 Dawn Osgood
11/17 Marcus Roll
11/18 Mark Wedde
11/19 Brent Dipert
11/19 Tom Taylor
11/20 Christopher Gaspari
11/25 David Lundgren
11/26 Mary Streufert
11/27 Erik Bergh
11/28 Emily Gaul
11/28 Melanie McCammon
11/30 Denise Cook

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members!

11/1 Kelli & Ryan Christman
11/6 Ken & Janet Boyd
11/11 Aaron & Betsy Becker
11/21 Deborah & Mark Vollmer
11/22 John & Kerrie Hoodlebrink
11/22 Walter & Sally Schmuhl

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round!"

If there are any omissions from the birthday or anniversary list, or if a date is incorrect, please let us know so we can get it correct in the future!

The sanctuary and narthex are being painted as I write this! We also have progress in the completion of the family restroom near the dining room. This modified facility is meant to be locked and used by anyone wishing for additional privacy. There is an infant changing table, toddler toilet seat and a chair. Let us know if there are additional features that would make this room more user-friendly.

We've also been working with a sign company on a potential design for the alley side of the building to draw more attention to what is now our main entrance. We will keep you updated!

Worship

NEW: ASSISTED HEARING DEVICES

Our new sound system in the sanctuary came with headphones to assist those having difficulty hearing the worship service. If you are interested, ask Marcus if you can try one out.

SENSORY BAGS

As part of extending an unconditional welcome to all, we have Sensory Bags available for use. These bags contain a variety of fidgets that can help someone feel more able to sit quietly and/or focus. We also have noise canceling headphones for those who are sound sensitive. These brightly colored bags can be found in the narthex.

PRAYER GROUP

You are invited to offer your prayer petitions (concerns or thanksgivings) via our attendance cards each Sunday. Requests can also be made online via a link in our Thursday email. You may include as much, or little, detail as you wish. Requests are then given to the Monday prayer group. **You are invited to be part of this Monday group at 11am.** We follow a simple format of morning prayer and insert the petitions and prayers for Saron's ministry and the world. You don't even have to pray aloud, if you would prefer to pray quietly. Most weeks we are done in 30 minutes.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sponsor a week by using the link in the weekly email or by contacting the church office. Please note any occasion/thanksgiving to be recognized in the bulletin. Flowers are $35 per vase. Checks are payable to Saron with "Flowers" as the memo. Take them home to enjoy then **simply return the vase to Saron.**

Nursery service is available during worship. In order to utilize the space most effectively, this option is primarily directed towards our youngest members and guests. For preschoolers that need more physical and/or emotional space, activities are available in the narthex, including clipboards with coloring pages and children's bulletins. **It's vital to embrace family units in all stages and as such, we gladly welcome wiggles and giggles in worship!**

The goal of the nursery is to provide a safe environment to facilitate a meaningful worship experience for families. We recognize that may not look the same for all and encourage sharing concerns and suggestions with Marilyn Lucy (269/759-3464). We can also use more volunteers!

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

November 3: All Saints Sunday
Isaiah 25:6-9
Psalm 24
Revelation 21:1-6
John 11:32-44

November 10: 25th Sunday after Pentecost
1 Kings 17:8-16
Psalm 146
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44

November 17: 26th Sunday after Pentecost
Daniel 12:1-3
Psalm 16
Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25
Mark 13:1-8

November 24: Christ the King Sunday
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14
Psalm 93
Revelation 1:4b-8
John 18:33-37

This group typically meets once per month after the late service for food, fun and fellowship. Friends are always welcome! **Contact Scott at scottgaspari@outlook.com with any questions or to be added to the email list.**

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

We have many educational options to fit your needs and schedule. Always feel welcome to join us, at any time and for as many sessions as works for you.

SUNDAY LEARNING HOUR

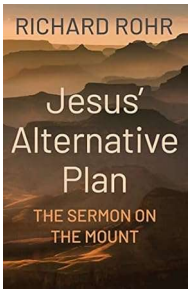
We have opportunities for many ages and stages!

The Sunday Learning Hour (9:40am-10:30am) offers the following options:

- Preschool - Grade 5: Sunday School
- Grades 6-8: Confirmation Classes
- High School - Adult: Adult Forum

TUESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Join us this fall as we delve into Richard Rohr's book, *Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount*. Rohr explores each of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, explaining the historical and cultural context of each verse and offering guidance for what it means for Christians today.

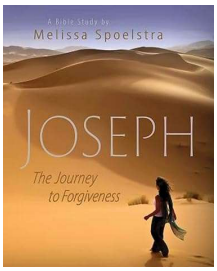


We meet Tuesday evenings at 6 pm in the upstairs lounge for one hour, then adjourn to a local restaurant for food and fellowship. Hope you can join us! **All are welcome!**

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text, or email:
Bob Kynast (269-921-2786, bobkynast@gmail.com)
Don Hafer (269-985-3637, hafer.don@gmail.com)

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Thursday morning Bible study is studying *Joseph, the Journey to Forgiveness.* The book is available on Amazon. New participants are always welcome. The class runs weekly from **9:30am-11am in the upstairs lounge**. Contact Colleen Lundgren at 269/921-4873 or colleenkl@icloud.com with any questions.



From the website: *This six-part study explores what God has to say to us about grace and forgiveness through Joseph's story of trial and triumph found in Genesis 37-50. As we study his dreams, his betrayers, his dysfunctional family, his struggle to forgive, and his journey toward reconciliation, we'll find truths that echo into our own personal situations as well as practical help for answering common questions, such as:*

- *How do I stop dwelling on the hurt?*
- *Is forgiving someone excusing what happened?*
- *When will I stop having to re-forgive?*
- *Is there a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation?*
- *How can I forgive and still set boundaries?*
- *Is it ever okay not to forgive?*

FORUM & fellowship

Wow! We are nearing the half way point of our program year. By the time you read this, we will have just finished our first session on getting to know our neighbors with special needs. Then our November 6 session will deal with folks who manage day-to-day life with physical disabilities. November 20 will be our last session before Advent and Christmas. The topic is a little different, *Connecting with Others; It's the Holiday Season!* Holiday time can be incredibly joyful or very stressful or lonely. How do we navigate those waters for ourselves and others in ways that *joyfully share God's love*? Some hints on personal journaling and maybe even some Christmas card writing may be involved. We meet at **7pm in the upstairs lounge**. Please consider joining us. Everyone is welcome!

More dates/topics:
January 8: Is MLK Still Relevant?
January 22: People of Indian Heritage (subcontinent)
February 5: People of Hispanic Origin
February 19: Families of One - Singles
April 23: Neighbors with 'Shrinking Worlds'
May 7: Neighbors Who Have Lost Family and Friends
May 21: Neighbors Struggling with Mental Health

Contact Ed Staude at 636/288-1016 with any questions.

November 3 at 6:30pm in the lounge, our discussion will center on *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. A discarded painting in a junk pile, a skeleton in an attic and the greatest racehorse in American history allows Brooks to weave her magic with a sweeping story of spirit, obsession and injustice across American history. Moving ahead to **December 1**, we will take on *The World Played Chess* by Robert Dugoni. In 1979, Vincent's only desire is to collect a little beer money and enjoy his final summer before college. Working on a construction crew alongside two Vietnam Vets, he gets the education of a lifetime. Now, forty years later, lessons from that summer unfold as his own son leaves for college to seek his own destiny. Please join us for good discussions and fellowship. All are welcome. Questions or to be added to our email list, contact Kathy Cowall at (269) 428-0354 or kcowall@hotmail.com.

No person who can read is ever successful at cleaning out an attic.
-Ann Landers

Women of the ELCA

SARON CHURCH WOMEN

We will meet on **Wednesday, November 13 at 7pm** in the church lounge for the **Annual Meeting**. Business matters will be discussed and voted upon. Thankoffering, as well as the other usual offerings, will be collected. All women of Saron are welcome to attend. Contact Melanie McCammon at 269/449-8399 with any questions.

Hospitality

SUNDAY SNACKS

Who doesn't love a snack during a time of fellowship in the narthex? If you would like to be a Sunday snack host, sign up via the link in our weekly email or call/email the office so Amanda can sign you up. Please plan for at least 30 to partake. Thank you!

Outreach

THE BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN™ HEART-TO-HEART™

Simple food, honestly sourced and lovingly made creates connections, gives fuel to the fight, and starves ignorance and apathy. -Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen

On September 22, Saron members Kathie & Dave Bradley, Mary & Mike Zylema, and Cindy Brown served 100 meals at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. Guests enjoyed a ham dinner which included potato salad, coleslaw, fruit, pickles, bread and homemade cookies. Thanks to our cookie bakers Marilyn Frey, Kathi Anserello and Steve & Kristyn Bell.

If you are able to help with the preparation and serving, or by providing cookies, use the link in the weekly email or contact Kathie Bradley at 269-921-4665.

Lutheran World Relief

Saron Church Women thanks everyone who contributed items for Lutheran World Relief. The total was 58 Personal Care Kits and 12 Fabric Kits. The

shipping/postage donation totaled $245. Thanks to Colleen Lundgren, Frieda Williams and Melanie McCammon for boxing up the kits. Thanks also to Mary Alice Brunner for transporting the kits to the collection site in Portage. All donations are greatly appreciated and will be used by many people in need. Thanks, again, for supporting this outreach effort.

Interfaith Action

Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity.

The first step in getting involved, is getting informed. Register to receive their communications at https://swmichinterfaith.org/contact1

Thank you to all who helped restock the Interfaith Action Migrant Pantry as part of the Celebration of the Harvest and Harvesters!

NOISY OFFERING

We receive a noisy offering
(or those not-so-noisy bills)
on the first Sunday of each month.
These gifts are sent to
ELCA World Hunger.

Thank you for your continued support!

EYE GLASS COLLECTION

Do you have old glasses sitting in a drawer? Lions Club has provided a collection box in the narthex. We have several members who are Lions that can deliver our glasses to the club where they will do more good. Thank you!

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

The Inclusivity Task Force is committed to extending a welcome to all. Our congregation adopted the following welcome statement and is a **Reconciling in Christ** church.

As a community of faith who *joyfully shares God's love for all*, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. We are committed to the work of racial equity. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome.

If you ever have any questions or need clarification on our inclusivity journey, please feel free to call any one of the task force members:

Laurel Gacek: 269/470-6062 or mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net
Lindsay Gaspari: 847/373-8826 or lindsay.gaspari@yahoo.com

Support

The Support Committee typically meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 8pm via Zoom. Contact Don Hafer with any questions at 269/985-3637.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with a brokerage firm to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Ed Brunner at ebrunner54@gmail.com to receive more information. Thanks!

Facilities

HELPING HANDS (Previously Golden Hammers)

We do all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. We meet on Wednesdays around 9am and know you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There is a job for you to use your helping hands.

FALL CLEANUP

Saturday, November 16
9am

Bring gloves, rakes, blowers, tarps and any other tools that might be helpful. Thank you for helping us maintain our beautiful grounds!

Other Bits of News

As we transition to a new pastor, it is vital to have volunteer spots filled and filled **EARLY** to avoid the stress of last-minute assignments. Please use the links in the weekly email to fill a reader, usher, or building closer spot for NEXT week, or ideally NEXT month, rather than waiting until right before to see if we have a need for Sunday. This would be a huge help. Thank you!!!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I can report we are moving forward in the Call Process! Thank you again to the Ministry Site Profile team – **Marcus Roll, Eric Standen, Marilyn Frey and Denise Cook**. They spent considerable time and energy thoughtfully filling out the extensive document that represents who Saron is and what we need in a pastoral candidate. It's since been approved by the synod and officially posted. Pastor Chrisy Bright said it was "solid" and does a nice job "selling" us. Good stuff. There are several copies in narthex if you are interested in reading it yourself. You can also ask Amanda to email you the file.

The next step was to form the Call Committee, consisting of no more than 6 voting members. **Ted Dosch (chair), Amanda Bradley, Mary Kynast, Tyler Cook, Chuck Knebl, Linda Pater and Joe Ulrey (non-voting)** agreed to serve and have been trained by Bishop Satterlee and Chrisy Bright, Assistant to the Bishop. We were installed during the service on October 27. We will meet the first week of November to complete a few homework assignments given to us, after which Saron will be eligible to receive paperwork on potential candidates.

Any questions, concerns, or even suggestions of potential pastoral candidates you are aware of, should be directed to me or Ted Dosch, as we are the only ones able to speak directly with the synod.

I would like to say a special thank you to **Karen Johnson, Laurie Caple, Kathy Bergh and Kristen Harper** for the many months of work they did investigating and getting quotes for a permanent outdoor labyrinth as the 150th commemorative project. While it didn't pan out for Saron at this time, we all learned a lot and I imagine there were individuals inspired to visit a labyrinth that might not have otherwise. We sincerely appreciate your intention and passion.

One last shout out to **Pastor Vicky Blough**. She is doing a fantastic job of keeping us focused on the present in worship each week and has graciously agreed to support us through the new year. We have a lot to be thankful for as we head into the holiday season.

- Joe Ulrey, Council President

Saron Lutheran Church

1875 | 150th Anniversary | 2025

- Get Involved! -

Our goal is to have a special event each month, starting in January 2025 and ending with the big finale in August. There is room for everyone to get involved. Let Karen know what looks good to you (269/313-9510 or karenj@attorneypeterjohnson.com). We will continue to update this sub-committee list as it evolves.

- January 12: Kick-off Event
- February 9: Super Chili Bowl
- March?
- April?
- May 10: Blossomtime Parade Entry
- June?
- July 14: Media Group Photo Day
- August 10: Worship Service Planning
- August 10: Meal Decorating & Programming
- Commemorative Project Planning
- Fundraising
- Historical Research & Documenting

- Update on Commemorative Project -

The planning committee would like Saron to undertake a large commemorative project that would benefit both our members and the community. After sending out a survey to the congregation, we found there was not enough support to move forward with incorporating a permanent outdoor labyrinth into the current courtyard/patio area. With 58 responses, the results were 38% supportive to 62% not supportive. We have since proposed to council a Plan B of remodeling the current courtyard/patio area with additions of prayer & meditation elements. That concept had 82% support of the congregation. Council is currently deliberating this option. In the meantime, a sub-committee has been formed to begin to work on what that could look like. If you are interested in joining, contact Marilyn Lucy at 269/759-3464.

- August 10, 2025 -

We will have a celebratory worship with Bishop Craig Satterlee at 10am, followed by a dinner at Union & Social, a beautiful venue in St. Joseph. Keep this date open during your travel planning for next year!

STEWARDSHIP

You are Invited!

Sunday, November 3

after either service for a celebration to mark the end of our 6 week *Generosity Rooted in Gratitude* stewardship series and the turning in of our financial commitments for 2025.

We will have listened, learned, prayed and come to a deeper understanding of our personal connections between generosity, gratitude and God. Now it's time to party!

*****

We sincerely appreciate all the hard work that went into our fall stewardship effort. It took many people to pull off the weekly devotions, mailings, the Stewardship Moments during the services, the question of the week tree, the indoor, outdoor & take-home prayer labyrinths, the Swedish themed celebration, and more. AND it was worth the effort because of YOU, the participants! Thank you for sharing in this journey and for your prayers. This congregation's willingness to be open and vulnerable is extraordinary and we are more connected to each other and to God than ever before!

If you have not had a chance to turn in your 2025 commitment form, there is still time before we begin putting together the budget for next year. There are additional forms in the narthex or contact the church office if you need one mailed/emailed.

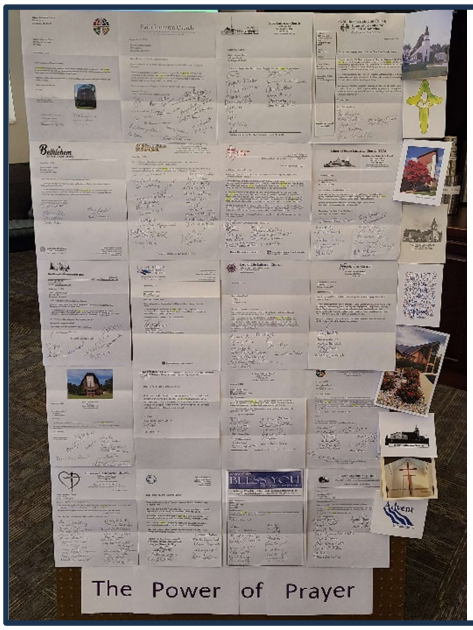
READERS THEATER GROUP

CALLING ALL THESPIANS!

Any age, any experience level (including no experience), if you are willing, you are welcome. In January, we incorporated a short reader's theater skit into our services to support our youth. We are now forming an on-going group to present such offerings throughout the year. If you would be interested, contact Ed Staude at staude.edmund@gmail.com. Our goal is to begin with this Advent season.

BURIAL PLOTS AVAILABLE

Are you, or someone you love, in need of a burial plot? Saron has been gifted with two adult plots, which can be divided, at **North Shore Memory Garden in Coloma**, as well as a niche for two end-to-end caskets in the Mausoleum. We are offering these at a reduced current value with proceeds going to the Endowment Fund. If interested, or you have questions, contact **Liz Kunkel (269/429-1132) or Pastor.**



The display board with the many supportive letters and cards received from other churches in our synod. Created as part of Stewardship Week 2: Showing Generosity through Prayer & Meditation.

NOVEMBER 2024

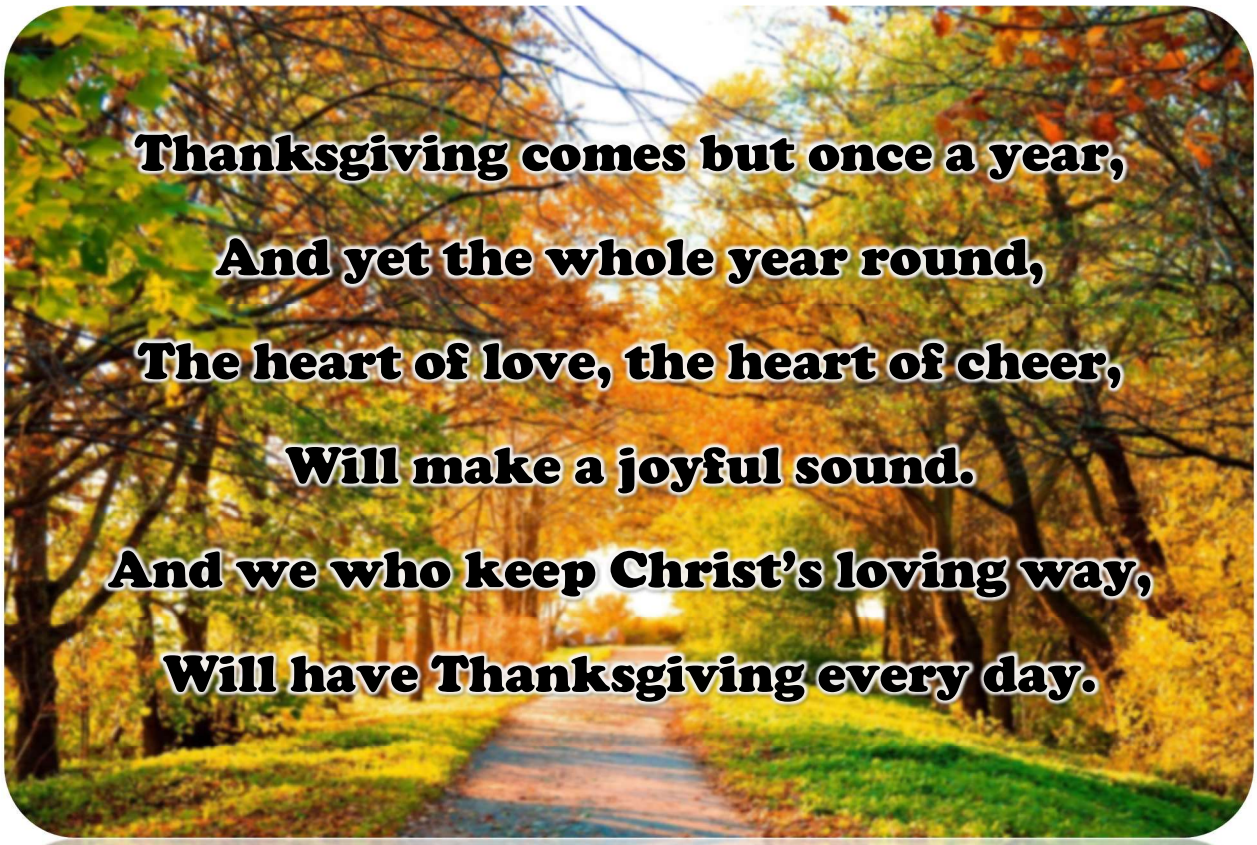
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	**2** 9:30am Move Furniture Back **SET CLOCKS BACK BEFORE BED**
3 **Commitment Sunday** 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning Hour 11am Worship with Zoom Option 6:30pm Book Club	**4** 11am Prayer Group	**5** 6pm Bible Study	**6** 9am Helping Hands 7pm Forum & Fellowship	**7** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells Rehearsal 7pm Choir Rehearsal	**8**	**9**
10 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning Hour 11am Worship with Zoom Option	**11** 11am Prayer Group	**12** 6pm Bible Study 8pm Support Meeting	**13** 9am Helping Hands 7pm Deborah Circle	**14** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells Rehearsal 7pm Choir Rehearsal	**15**	**16** **FALL CLEANUP 9am**
17 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning Hour 11am Worship with Zoom Option	**18** 11am Prayer Group 7pm Council Meeting **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE**	**19** 6pm Bible Study	**20** 9am Helping Hands 7pm Forum & Fellowship	**21** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells Rehearsal 7pm Choir Rehearsal	**22**	**23**
24 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning Hour 11am Worship with Zoom Option	**25** 11am Prayer Group	**26** 7pm Thanksgiving Service	**27** 9am Helping Hands	**28** **Happy Thanksgiving!**	**29**	**30**

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER


Thanksgiving comes but once a year,
And yet the whole year round,
The heart of love, the heart of cheer,
Will make a joyful sound.
And we who keep Christ's loving way,
Will have Thanksgiving every day.